

*WANDA VÁZQUEZ-GARCED*  
*Governor of Puerto Rico 2019-2021*

July 9, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

***RE: Confirmation of Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró to the U.S. District Court***

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write as a former Prosecutor, District Attorney, Women's Advocate, Secretary of Justice, and Governor of Puerto Rico to convey my full support for Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró to be confirmed by the United States Senate to the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. I am confident that her professional qualifications, experience as a judge and demonstrated capacity as an attorney, suit her for the federal bench.

I have known Judge Méndez-Miró personally and professionally for almost 15 years. I first met her at the Department of Justice (DOJ) where she served as Assistant Attorney General for Human Resources, and I was Prosecutor and later District Attorney. I remember her as a bright and thoughtful attorney with impressive leadership skills. Judge Méndez-Miró oversaw all matters dealing with the DOJ's workforce which is comprised of thousands of employees, among them, civil attorneys, hundreds of prosecutors, investigators and their support staff which, from experience, is not an easy feat. At that time, we interacted to deal with employment, legal, and regulatory matters.

In addition to her practical and insightful legal advice to me and all District Attorneys, she oversaw and participated in the litigation of labor and employment cases which was then her area of expertise. In 2008 she asked to be designated as a Special Prosecutor while keeping her workload as Assistant Secretary of Justice. She asked to be under my guidance because I oversaw the Specialized Unit on Domestic Violence, and this topic was of interest to her. Once a week she

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would come to court and litigate cases that ranged from domestic violence, illegal appropriations, among others.

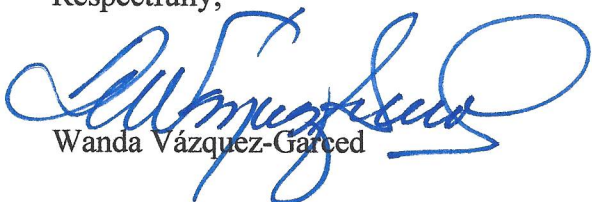
After her impeccable work at the Puerto Rico Department of Justice, she continued her public service at the Puerto Rico Judicial Branch. I often collaborated with her office on initiatives related to the Specialized Domestic Violence Courts. She was exceptionally bright, eloquent, and very hard working. I always saw an attorney with true compromise with access to justice.

Our paths crossed again while she was serving as Chief of Staff in the Puerto Rico Senate, and I was at the Women's Advocacy Office. Two experiences come to mind. The first, when she reached out to me to help the sister of a coworker that was experiencing a terrible domestic violence situation. This is the type of person Gina is, empathetic and selfless, she will get involved and take action on situations where others would look the other way. The second relates to a bill that was introduced that would seriously harm the regulatory and fiscal autonomy of the Women's Advocacy Office and its capacity to provide direct services to victims of domestic violence. She helped me convey my position to the legislators that the Women's Advocacy Office should maintain full autonomy to better serve women, particularly the programs that dealt with gender-based violence. The proposed bill did not prosper, and I believe she was a key component in that endeavor.

After witnessing her work in all three branches of government, it was no surprise that she was appointed and unanimously confirmed as a judge in the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals. Furthermore, a review of her work on the bench shows a wide array of judicial decisions that are clear, well written and analytically rigorous. Judge Méndez-Miró is clearly aware of the position she occupies as a judge on an intermediate court of appeals, applying precedent and deferring as appropriate to trial court or administrative agency fact finding and expertise. I believe she has demonstrated to be an excellent judge that shows command of the law and procedural rules and is consistently fair and reasonable in their application.

As former Governor I felt an immense sense of responsibility when nominating judicial appointees because of the long-lasting effects and repercussions of their judicial decisions on society. Thus, I strived to appoint judicial candidates with the temperament, intellect, experience, and integrity that the job requires. Judge Méndez-Miró is that type of candidate, and one who has shown unequivocal dedication to public service and commitment to justice. Her record demonstrates a rigorous work ethic combined with a strong educational background and a broad spectrum of professional experience. Therefore, I wholeheartedly recommend you consider her swift confirmation for judicial service as a judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

Respectfully,



Wanda Vázquez-Garced

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